



Jaci Jean Hermstad

August 22, 1993 - May 1, 2020

Jaci Jean Hermstad, age 26, of Spencer, Iowa and formerly of Storm Lake, Iowa passed away Friday, May 1, 2020 at her home in Spencer.

A Celebration of Life will take place Saturday, August 8, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. at Swiss Acres: 2828 220th Street Terril, Iowa 51364. Following the service there will be a meal provided along with a dance and bonfire. Jaci loved all things country and this is exactly what she hoped and believed she would do when she got better. So to honor Jaci, we feel like this is the perfect way to Celebrate her life. We ask that you kindly RSVP at: <https://bit.ly/JaciHermstadRSVP>. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Storm Lake is in charge of the arrangements.

Jaci was born along with her twin sister Alex on August 22, 1993 to Jeff and Lori (Hadden) Hermstad in Cherokee, Iowa.

Jaci attended St. Mary's Catholic Schools and Storm Lake Community Schools. Jaci was confirmed at Grace Lutheran Church in Storm Lake, in 2008. Jaci was active in many sports and very much enjoyed outdoor activities. She loved four-wheeling, snowmobiling, gardening, boating – and especially found a passion for riding horses. Jaci and Alex were introduced to horses at the age of 4. Jaci looked back at that day as the moment her enthusiasm and love for horses began. Riding horses became her therapy and helped her feel close to Alex as she moved forward in life without her sister at the age of 17. She won numerous 1st place awards at the Buena Vista County Fair as a 4-H member. She was passionate about livestock, horses and rodeos. She was crowned Miss Rodeo Cherokee in 2012. She felt a sense of duty and honor with the position as young girls, even years later, would tell Jaci how her kindness impacted them. Anyone who met Jaci fell in love with her infectious personality and zest for life. Jaci graduated from Storm Lake High School in 2012. She was a featured speaker at her commencement ceremony where she said, "life will give you trials and tribulations but it's how you respond to them is what's important."

Jaci excelled at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa earning an Associates of Applied Science degree in Agricultural Production Management but more importantly, winning hearts. She served as an Agriculture Ambassador for the school and was asked to speak at a scholarship recognition dinner. She left everyone in tears as she walked off stage to a standing ovation.

Jaci interned at a working cattle and horse ranch in Montana over the summer of 2014 where she learned a lot about western lifestyle and cow/calf operations. There were no worries of this cowgirl from Iowa keeping up with the ranching chores. It was one of the happiest and most memorable times in her life as she always wanted to venture out west.

Jaci then graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Science from South Dakota State University. She found her dream job in Spencer working for Spencer Ag as a field marketer. Jaci cherished and loved her time working at Spencer Ag, all the people she worked with, and customers around NW Iowa. Jaci's coworkers and customers quickly learned that she gives 110% to everything in life.

Jaci dove headlong into her career with the same determination and joy for life she always had. She was a board member on the Clay County Cattleman's Association and the Clay County Farm Bureau. The Spencer Daybreakers Kiwanis Club recognized Jaci just last year for her outstanding efforts and dedication to agriculture.

She could shoot the breeze and her quick and witty personality left everyone with a smile. Jaci had a sweet disposition to be able to talk to anyone. Additionally, if you were around Jaci, within no time at all, her infectious laugh would fill the air. If you listened closely, you would hear some fun-spirited snorts too.

Frequently referred to as Ginger, Jaci was known to buy lunch for a stranger, as a Jaci-way to pay it forward to others.

Jaci didn't let losing her sister Alex to ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease) stop her. Though a part of her died along with Alex, Jaci didn't turn towards despair and darkness. She embraced life and loved her family, her friends, her faith, her job and her horse, Bud. She lived her life with laughter, courage, and a positive outlook – even against impossible odds after her own ALS diagnosis on Valentine's Day 2019. As Jaci faced the same disease that took her sister on Valentine's Day 2011, she didn't give up. She stood up to the ravages of ALS and fought it courageously. She personally urged lawmakers and the FDA to release a new personalized drug designed for her to treat her relentless type of ALS. Eventually that drug would be known as "Jacifusen". She started treatment in June of 2019 and had her 12th

and final treatment in March 2020. She did not lose the fight against ALS. Jacifusen is currently being used to treat other ALS patients and eventually expanding from there. Her doctors have hope Jacifusen is on the cusp of becoming a cure or to at least slow down symptoms for Jaci and Alex's type of ALS. Jaci and Alex are both our selfless heroes in the ALS community. They are helping to save lives and advancing science furthering studies by both valiantly donating their tissue to research to a level where someday soon a cure might be found.

With a smile on her face and a sparkle in her eye, Jaci always lived up to her response to the question "How are you doing?" by replying "Livin the dream."

Jaci's sacrifice, perseverance and courage in the face of overwhelming odds, is already becoming legendary in the ALS community and her story will have everlasting influence on countless others. The impact Jaci's life and journey had is profound – thousands of well-wishers from all over the world followed Jaci and hoped and prayed for the miracle of a cure. Jaci's parents, Jeff and Lori, cannot express their thanks enough to so many.

Though her time tragically ended far too soon, Jaci loved life and lived it to the fullest with no regrets. She loved horses, cows and all animals, loved to dance, loved running, loved country music, loved snowmobiling and four-wheeling, loved to make others laugh, loved to work hard, loved spending time with family and friends, loved to encourage and lift up those who are down and loved living her faith. Jaci embraced life and Heaven is now lucky to have our Cowgirl.

Those left to cherish her memory include parents, Lori and Jeff Hermstad of Spencer, Iowa; maternal grandmother, Jean Hadden of Storm Lake, Iowa; uncles and aunts: Scott (Renee) Hadden of Victoria, Minnesota; Terri (Bruce) Groen of Spencer, Iowa; Mike Hadden of Indianola, Iowa; Mike Hermstad of Spencer, Iowa; Tim (Mary Boge) Hermstad of Sioux Rapids, Iowa; Brad (Heidi) Hermstad of Sioux Rapids, Iowa; cousins: Kady Groen of Des Moines, Iowa; Brody (Mikaela) Groen of Minnetonka, Minnesota; Ashley and Amanda Hadden of Victoria, Minnesota; Heather (Kyle) Hennings of Hartley, Iowa; Haley Hermstad of Hartley, Iowa; Grayson and Kayley Hermstad of Sioux Rapids, Iowa; extended family and many friends.

Jaci is preceded in death by her identical twin sister, Alexandria "Alex" Hermstad; maternal grandfather, David Hadden; paternal grandparents: Milo Hermstad and Colleen Hermstad; uncle, Bruce Hermstad; and aunt, Denise Hermstad.

As was often spoken, "Love you sweet cheeks" ~Jaci

Thank you Jaci for nearly 27 years of joy, love, faith, inspiration, laughter and courage. Your sense of humor, your playful and positive outlook on life helped us through so many rough moments. Most of all we will never forget that sparkle in your eyes, like a light shining right from your soul. As a believer that Christ gave us an eternity with Him, we take some comfort knowing we will be together again and we'll treasure seeing you on a beautiful horse, a smile on your face and your hair waving in a heavenly breeze, shouting happily "Livin the Dream." Rest now our daughter and know you are loved.

Love, Mom and Dad

Comments



“ We just found out about Jaci. Our hearts go out to both of you and the family. When I saw her picture, I thought I never saw her with her hair down. It was always pulled back in a pony tail and she had a ball cap on her head. She was all cow girl from her boots to her truck. She brought over Christmas treats one year and we had a delightful chat. If we were there we would definitely come to the celebration. You know Dean and I are hugh country music and dancing fans. If we make it back, we will definitely come to see you. Love Mary Ellen and Dean.

Mar Ellen and Dean Ericksen - July 31, 2020 at 04:02 PM



“ Ruth Westergaard lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Ruth Westergaard - July 21, 2020 at 05:59 PM



“ We continue to prayer for your family for the strength to get through your difficult days. Your girls were your everything and now that they r together they will keep there arms wrapped around u both and love u and to watch over u. Keep the memories close.



Cheri Nehring - July 20, 2020 at 01:43 PM



“ Sophia Richardson lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Sophia Richardson - June 02, 2020 at 08:50 PM



“ Deb Landgraf lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Deb Landgraf - May 13, 2020 at 07:02 PM



“ We continue to lift your family in our prayers and pray for peace to come. Jaci was a beautiful light in the world and her story and fight will live on.



Amy Jacobson Chrischilles - May 13, 2020 at 02:06 PM



“ God love you and your entire family

John Morris - May 12, 2020 at 04:41 AM



“ Marla Hogan lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Marla Hogan - May 11, 2020 at 09:13 AM



“ I woke up this morning this of you, Jaci's parents. Please know you will continue to be in my prayers. May our heavenly Father surround you with His presence and spirit.

Amy Bicek-Engel - May 10, 2020 at 12:21 PM



“ Sue Mason lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



sue mason - May 10, 2020 at 07:46 AM



“ Im sorry for Your Loss i have heard great things about your girl. Wherever you two go just remember your daughters are with you in your heart.

Jayme - May 10, 2020 at 05:07 AM



“ Lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Vicki and David Schreier - May 10, 2020 at 03:02 AM



“ Lit a candle in honor of Jaci Jean Hermsted



Vicki and David Schreier - May 10, 2020 at 02:53 AM



“ Barb Evans lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Barb Evans - May 09, 2020 at 05:36 PM



“ Jarred Faber lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Jarred Faber - May 09, 2020 at 10:47 AM



“ Her light touched so many. My sympathy to you all.

Dayle Brooks



Dayle Brooks - May 09, 2020 at 09:59 AM



“ Cynthia Hahn lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Cynthia Hahn - May 09, 2020 at 09:02 AM



“ Jaci’s smile, laughter and full of life personality was a true blessing for anyone that got to spend time with her. We are heart broken for all of you and pray that God will forever wrap his arms of protection, healing, courage and strength around you. We love you.

sue - May 09, 2020 at 08:13 AM



“ Kelly Wessel lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Kelly Wessel - May 09, 2020 at 12:47 AM



“ I didn’t know Jaci personally, but followed her story on Facebook. Her story and fight was inspirational to me as a fellow ALS warrior, and I prayed her treatments would slow or stop her progression. It took courage to fight for a cure, and she moved the ball forward for all of us suffering from this dreadful disease. Heartbreaking loss. My condolences to the family and may she Rest In Peace with her sister.

tara collazo - May 09, 2020 at 12:19 AM



“ I've never met you but read your beautiful words. Please know I'll pray for you and your beautiful girls... God bless you all.

Meredith - May 08, 2020 at 11:30 PM



“ Jaci was one of a kind. Truly the epitome of all that is right with the world. I will never forget our warrior, the love she had for life and everyone around her. May she Rest In Peace with her beautiful sister. Jaci is fully whole and healed in the presence of our Savior, Jesus Christ. One day we will see her again. Many prayers to her family.

Jennifer Robinson - May 08, 2020 at 11:19 PM



“ You don't know me, but I and sending lots of prayers and Big Hugs to you all! Read her story and it touched my heart , as we lost a son at the age of 16 and know what you will have to go through in the come days and years! I was so very sorry to read that you had lost her sister before her,



Ellen Jensen - May 08, 2020 at 11:10 PM



“ Pam Carson lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Pam Carson - May 08, 2020 at 11:01 PM



“ Jana Thompson lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Jana Thompson - May 08, 2020 at 09:35 PM



“ Our prayers continue for you all!



Karmen Hodgdon - May 08, 2020 at 09:35 PM



“ Sharon Mock lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Sharon Mock - May 08, 2020 at 09:14 PM



“ Loreen E Moneypenny lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Loreen E Moneypenny - May 08, 2020 at 08:45 PM



“ Such amazing, beautiful words! Please know we are wrapping our arms around you in virtual hugs and praying for comfort for you all. Our deepest sympathies on the loss of beautiful Jaci.

Barb Murphy - May 08, 2020 at 12:15 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home - May 08, 2020 at 11:34 AM



“ An amazing tribute to a beautiful soul gone to soon. Keeping you all in our prayers.

Jerry Pyke - May 08, 2020 at 08:47 PM



“ I love the video. She is a beautiful girl and I am sending Prayers your way.

LaDonna Katschman - May 08, 2020 at 09:57 PM



“ Absolutely beautiful. A life taken way to soon.

jana peterson - May 08, 2020 at 10:10 PM



“ I have been following the story of sweet Jaci for the last year. God love this sweet soul and of Alex. This journey has been so heartbreaking, I do feel your Pain. My family suffers from FALS. But today, I cry and am so very sad for your loses. Thank you for all Jaci went thru on her Jacinfusions. Bless you all, your family will always hold a special place in my My deepest condolences

Mary Betti - May 08, 2020 at 11:43 PM



“ I did not know your beautiful daughter. But it's a true statement that during her short time on earth she touched so many lives. So sorry for your loss. She's watching over you.

Darla Hamann - May 09, 2020 at 12:07 AM



“ RIP angel

Bernadette - May 09, 2020 at 02:29 AM



“ I prayed for Jaci every night. So difficult to understand. May God Bless And Comfort You!

Marlene Cihak - May 09, 2020 at 09:55 AM



“ Its hard to post with my eyes leaking. This family is amazing!! The girls are in heaven with those big smiles. Mr and Mrs H, you are god sent.

David - May 09, 2020 at 01:02 PM



“ Hugs to you guys

Greg stuckenschneider - May 09, 2020 at 01:46 PM



“ This is so beautiful. Plus beautiful girl. God loves her and we all have wonderful memories. Thank you so much for sharing.

Chuck and Donna Tielbur - May 09, 2020 at 06:42 PM



“ Beautiful pictures for memories. RIP Jaci. Prayers for healing to the family. So sorry for your loss.

Melony Arehart - May 09, 2020 at 07:10 PM



“ Absolutely beautiful tribute. Bittersweet tears for the family. I pray for Jeff and Lori and all her family and friends, that, through your tears, you will find the strength through God to smile, even if ever so briefly, knowing that Alex was waiting with open arms to be reunited with her other half, Jaci, and that they will ride free together with their angel wings and will be watching over you until you are reunited again for eternity. It may be goodbye to Jaci here on earth, and I cannot even imagine the pain you feel right now, but Jaci will be in Heaven just "living the dream" until you are reunited in Heaven with Alex and Jaci. Sending sincere sympathy and heartfelt prayers for strength and peace now and every day.

Pamela Pates - May 10, 2020 at 11:42 AM



“ Beautiful! Jaci did touch a lot of lives! She was so full of life and so committed to her faith. My heart is broken for the ones left behind. Prayers to help you through this time.

Janet Schenzel - May 11, 2020 at 12:19 PM



“ My friend Lori ... my heart is so broke for you and Jeff and Jaci's whole family ... and friends ... we have been friends for several yrs. ALS brought us together ... as I lost my Mom to ALS ... losing my Mom to ALS was very hard ... but nothing compared to the hurt and lose of not one but both of your precious daughters to ALS ... such sweet young girls taken too soon ... Jaci fought so hard ... and her family fought also ... It just saddens my heart so much ... I have prayed and cried many tears ... I had hoped and prayed for a cure for Jaci and so many others thru their battle ... Jaci not only was trying to find a cure but also for others who fight this battle everyday ... Jaci & Alex are my hero's ... those sweet Angels will never be forgotten ... Jaci shined a light on ALS ... many people know what ALS is now ... as so many followed her journey ... she paved a way to hopefully find a cure soon ... just wish there was a cure already ... I am so sorry and I can't even try to imagine the pain and heartache that you and Jeff are going thru ... but I pray and I cry ... and can't understand why ... both of these sweet girls have now moved on to their Heavenly home it's so hard to live on our earthly home without our loved ones ... I Love you Lori and will keep In touch ... sending prayers and hugs ... God Bless you and comfort you <3 this is a beautiful video ... and so touching ... two beautiful Angels

Regina Irwin - May 12, 2020 at 02:09 AM



“ Beautiful video showing all the stages of her life. She was blessed to have a loving and caring family, and that was probably the source of her illuminating spirit. I love that she was a woman of deep faith. The time will come when death will not separate us from our loved ones-in Jesus name!!!

Rebecca Lueth - May 29, 2020 at 10:14 PM



“ Beth Johnson / Chris Wood lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Beth Johnson / Chris Wood - May 08, 2020 at 07:55 AM



“ May all of us who are battling ALS model the example of Jaci
Jennifer Long - May 09, 2020 at 10:40 AM



“ Sally Rassler lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Sally Rassler - May 07, 2020 at 11:20 PM



“ Terra Sheehan-Sievers lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Terra Sheehan-Sievers - May 07, 2020 at 03:48 PM



“ Kevin & Julie McKinney lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Kevin & Julie McKinney - May 07, 2020 at 01:10 PM



“ Vicki Sorbe lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Vicki Sorbe - May 07, 2020 at 10:24 AM



“ Patricia Davidson lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Patricia Davidson - May 07, 2020 at 12:54 AM



“ Rose Baker lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Rose Baker - May 06, 2020 at 01:36 PM



“ Kim Martin sent a virtual gift in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Kim Martin - May 06, 2020 at 11:42 AM



“ I have cried so many tears over the heartbreak of losing Alex and now Jaci; beautiful souls gone way to soon! My heart aches for Jeff and Lori. My you know that your beautiful girls are together in the arms of Jesus with no more suffering. We are praying and loving you always! The Martin family

Kim Martin - May 06, 2020 at 11:47 AM



“ Sue Lloyd sent a virtual gift in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Sue Lloyd - May 05, 2020 at 11:57 PM



“ Peg Anderson sent a virtual gift in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Peg Anderson - May 05, 2020 at 11:43 PM



“ Rosemary Booth lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Rosemary Booth - May 05, 2020 at 10:21 PM



“ I was deeply moved when I heard the news of Jaci's passing. She fought a courageous battle to the end, never giving in. Her fight serves as the model for the human endeavor in its recognition of how precious life is. Rest in peace.

Jason Stoltzfus - May 05, 2020 at 08:09 PM



“ Bev Reis lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Bev Reis - May 05, 2020 at 07:26 PM



“ Prayers to all



Douglas Sutton - May 05, 2020 at 03:08 PM



“ Jeff Chindlund Family sent a virtual gift in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Jeff Chindlund family - May 05, 2020 at 01:38 PM



“ Angie And Adam Kutz sent a virtual gift in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Angie and Adam Kutz - May 05, 2020 at 01:07 PM



“ Candi Whittenburg sent a virtual gift in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Candi Whittenburg - May 05, 2020 at 12:22 PM



“ The Wiley's lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



The Wiley's - May 05, 2020 at 11:55 AM



“ My thoughts and prayers go out to Jaci's family.
dearly. R.I.P. JACI

She will be missed



Amy Strahmann - May 05, 2020 at 11:03 AM



“ Robert Baschke lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Robert Baschke - May 05, 2020 at 09:43 AM



“ Heartfelt sorrow and deepest sympathy dear family! Heaven rejoices ; twins reunited in perfect health and peace! HE WILL LIFT YOU UP ON EAGLES' WINGS!!!

Barbara Huebner - May 05, 2020 at 08:40 AM



“ Barbara Huebner lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Barbara Huebner - May 05, 2020 at 08:36 AM



“ Marjean & Jeff O'Bannon lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Marjean & Jeff O'Bannon - May 05, 2020 at 07:54 AM



“ She fought a good fight I was on Facebook the the whole time . U guys as parents were great with her and fighting with her . I send my condolences.. I will miss her to it was like I was there with u guys . Praying for u

Melissa stamp - May 05, 2020 at 06:10 AM



“ Justin Buschmann sent a virtual gift in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Justin Buschmann - May 04, 2020 at 10:38 PM



“ Sending you all many virtual hugs and praying many prayers that you might find some peace in all of this. You are so incredibly strong! We can't know why things happen but we can trust that love and beautiful memories outlast the pain of grief!



Barb Jacobson - May 04, 2020 at 10:13 PM



“ Suè Zemke lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Suè Zemke - May 04, 2020 at 10:10 PM



“ Suè Zemke lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Suè Zemke - May 04, 2020 at 10:08 PM



“ R I P Jaci

Suè Zemke - May 04, 2020 at 10:07 PM



“ Connie Roche sent a virtual gift in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



connie roche - May 04, 2020 at 08:23 PM



“ Pat Barnett lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Pat Barnett - May 04, 2020 at 07:20 PM



“ Bernie & Ann Onnen lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Bernie & Ann Onnen - May 04, 2020 at 04:06 PM



“ WE LIT A CANDLE IN MEMORY OF JACI J. HERMSTAD. WE ARE SO SAD IN THE LOSS OFF YOUR DAUGHTER, JEFF & LORI. & GRAMS & GRAMP. NOW SHE IS WITH HER ANGEL SISTER IN HEAVEN WITH NO MORE SUFFERING.. MAY YOU ALL COME TO THE GIFT OF PEACE. FRIENDS OF GRAM JEAN.

MANY PRAYERS FOR YOU,
LARY & PATTY GUNVILLE

PATTY GUNVILLE - May 04, 2020 at 04:05 PM



“ Pat & Cherles Ryherd lit a candle in memory of Jaci Jean Hermstad



Pat & Cherles Ryherd - May 04, 2020 at 03:37 PM